



Mr Andrew Bachell
Director of Countryside
National Trust for Scotland
5 Charlotte Square
EDINBURGH
EH2 4DV

8 January 1998

Our Ref: 26/NTS/MP
26/NTS/HLF

12 JAN 1998
J. S. CHAMBERLAIN

Dear Andrew

MAR LODGE ESTATE: MANAGEMENT PLAN 1997 - 2000

I am writing in connection with NTS Mar Lodge Estate Management Plan 1997 - 2000 which was approved by your Council on 25th April 1997.

As you are aware it is a condition of the SNH Management Agreement that NTS produce and SNH approve a management plan for Mar Lodge Estate. For the most part, SNH considers the Management Plan to be a very useful document which will guide the integrated management of all aspects of the Estate up to the year 2000. The one substantive issue of concern to SNH is the NTS policy on cycling within the Estate, particularly the wider estate. You are already aware of SNH's view that cycling in the Cairngorms is a bona fide recreational activity. The real issue is not whether cycling per se is unsustainable in "wild land" areas in the Cairngorms but the manner and location in which it is carried out.

Despite our contrary views on the principle of cycling on the wider estate, we welcome the Trust's approach in not attempting to prohibit cycling. In addition we welcome the Trust's intention to erect interpretative signs at the Linn O'Dee car park which will place the issue of cycling in the wider context of the aims of objectives of estate management. Unfortunately the current cycling signs, despite their polite language, single out cyclists and do not I believe explain adequately why they cannot use hard tracks on the wider estate, particularly the road up to Derry Lodge.

Overall however, SNH is pleased with the considerable progress made by NTS since the acquisition of the Estate in 1995. Accordingly, on behalf of SNH I am pleased to formally approve the NTS Mar Lodge Management Plan 1997 - 2000.

Finally, as I mentioned to you some time ago I wish to arrange twice yearly meetings with you to forward plan SNH's financial contribution to the management of the estate. This would be outside the aegis of the Estate Management Committee and would I believe be of mutual benefit to the Trust and SNH. Perhaps we can discuss suitable dates when we meet at Mar Lodge on the 11th February.

Yours faithfully


DR R A MACDONALD
Area Manager
Grampian

c.c. Janet Stevenson Connor, Heritage Lottery Fund

Roger Burton, SNH